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Profile

Community Leader and Advocate

We are pleased to feature a profile of Jackie Gaboury, Director of Odyssey House in Grande Prairie, the only women's shelter in the Northwest region. Jackie's husband, Jean-Paul, teaches school. "He is very supportive of my career and shares in the responsibilities of managing our home and raising our two children, Cameron and Ashley."

"I can't think of a better person than Jackie Gaboury to profile as a representative from a battered women's shelter. She is the kind of person who never thinks of herself. She has so much interest and concern for the people she works with," says Margaret Bowes, Secretary of the Alberta Council of Women's Shelters and long time Board member of the Grande Prairie Women's Residence Association.

Jackie has been director of Odyssey House since September, 1980. She began only three months after the shelter opened and has directed its development from a novice agency which had to demonstrate both the need for its services and its ability to deliver these services to an essential, integral, well respected part of the community.

Jackie recalls that when she began her work in the shelter, there were almost no resources available for assistance. The only written material to which she had access was the newly published *Wife Battering in Canada: The Vicious Circle* by Linda MacLeod.

Social Services was providing grants for three months operating at a time. She remembers relying on Edmonton's WIN House for needed information and advice. "Much of our learning was on the job. Few professionals had any understanding of the issue and even fewer agencies were available for referrals or assistance."

The incorporation of the Alberta Council of Women's Shelters in 1983 was, in Jackie's words, an opportunity "for sharing program information, what has worked and how to intervene."

Having worked with Edmonton's Rape Crisis Centre for three years, Jackie's knowledge of incest and sexual assault has proven valuable when dealing with many abusive situations. More recently, she has become deeply concerned with the issue of suicide in the troubled families that come for help to the shelter. "Suicide is one of the issues that the staff must be comfortable with. They need a good knowledge base to be able to assess whether the women are contemplating suicide. We occasionally have to intervene with the husbands also and refer them for help. Even the children have sometimes turned all the hurt inward."

"I think we at Odyssey House provide good services for women - with lots of understanding. We run an in-house information group which I think is probably the most exciting

thing I've seen in shelters and probably the most powerful help for women. We also have a support group that runs outside of the shelter for women who are not residents."

Stimulating awareness, concern and action in the community on behalf of abused women and their children has been an integral part of Jackie's work. With support from Social Services she, along with others from Odyssey House and Peace River Community Services, organized a meeting of concerned persons through the Northwest Region in 1984. Out of that gathering grew the Northwest Family Violence Steering Committee, a group representing all the major communities in the Region. The Committee studied the needs of the area and developed a comprehensive plan to address them.

When asked what she thought were the most important issues for her at this time, Jackie replied without hesitation "providing safety for women in rural and isolated areas. This is the issue we must work on." All those who are familiar with Jackie know that she will certainly be working on this issue with care and dedication, just as she has dealt with other issues she has faced.

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From the Literature

Crisis Lines: Help for Victims of Family Violence

Someone to hear about the hurt, the sorrow, the anger, the confusion. Someone to listen. Someone to help sort out what to do. Someone that knows what resources are available. These are the services provided by a crisis line; services available a phone call away. This is what is needed by victims of all types of family violence, by people in crisis and by those trying to head off or cope with the aftermath of crises.

Several communities in Alberta have recognized these needs and have established various types of crisis lines. Some operate 24 hours a day. Others, with fewer resources, operate during a more limited time frame.

Some lines are staffed by professionals, while others use volunteers and some use both. Emergency shelters for battered women operate crisis lines, as do some religious groups and community agencies.

Elsewhere, the Manitoba Committee on Wife Abuse has recently put in place a province-wide toll free line which offers crisis counselling and referral to victims of abuse. In the Netherlands a telephone service for children called Kindertelefoon receives around 60,000 calls a year from children, many of them related to abuse and neglect.

Having trained volunteers available for follow-up is an important component of a comprehensive crisis line

service. The support and advocacy a volunteer provides can help victims of family violence and, in some cases, potential or actual perpetrators find the help they need to relieve the trauma or even to prevent the abuse from happening.

The Office for the Prevention of Family Violence Resource Centre has a small collection of material that discusses the initiation and operation of crisis lines. Included are:

Fleming, Jennifer Baker, *Stopping Wife Abuse*; Roberts, Albert R., *Sheltering Battered Women: A National Study and Service Guide*; Crisis Intervention Service, Iowa, *A Manual: Rural Domestic Violence Intervention*

Did You Know?

- Young people across Canada, many of them victims of family violence who have spent much of their lives "in care" are organizing to help themselves. The Canadian Child Welfare Association provided start-up funds which enabled Troy Rypstra (a graduate of Alberta's Child Welfare system) to do some initial organizing, part of which was arranging and conducting a very successful meeting of **Youth-in-Care** delegates from across Canada. For more information contact Troy c/o Canadian Child Welfare Association, 2211 Riverside Drive, Suite 14, Ottawa, Ontario.

- The Lions Club of Wetaskiwin assisted the schools in their town to prepare to use a kit which is designed to help children cope with current issues. One section focuses on conflict within families. The Club paid for trainers to prepare teachers to implement the program.

- During the last session of Parliament, a bill to amend the **Canada Evidence Act** was introduced. The bill proposed

that "corroborating evidence not be required" in proceedings for sexual offences against young persons under the age of 18 years. Included in the proposal was a provision for the use of a video tape made soon after the offence was committed, in which the complainant describes the acts. In such cases, the complainant would be required to adopt the contents of the video in the course of testifying. When Prime Minister Mulroney adjourned the parliamentary session, the bill died on the order paper. It is not known if it will be reintroduced.

• Delinquency and Child Abuse

"Children in trouble are usually children who have been hurt." This is the conclusion of an article reporting on yet another study of juvenile offenders in the U.S. The primary question asked in this study was: will "those who report histories of physical abuse report higher degrees of involvement in offences of personal violence than will those without abuse histories?" The answer: abused offenders reported

medium or high frequency of involvement in violence at twice the rate of non-abused offenders, and non-abused offenders reported little or no involvement at nearly three times the rate of abused offenders. (Justice for Children Vol. 1 (4) 1986.)

- Betty Leduc, Area Manager, attended the **International Symposium on Violence and Aggression** in Saskatoon in June. Betty reports that one of the best speakers was Dr. West, Director of Neuropsychiatric Institute, Los Angeles, who spoke about "Epidemiology of Violence" and "Alcohol/Drugs and Violence." According to Dr. West, 130,000,000 people have died from violence in the 20th Century. This includes interpersonal violence as well as wars, racial persecution, tribal conflict, car and airplane accidents, and more recently, terrorism and product tampering. He noted that money has been very difficult to obtain for the purpose of addressing this issue.

Community News

Calgary

The Child Abuse Program at Alberta Children's Hospital received a generous anonymous donation last November which is enabling it to add one direct service staff and one research and evaluation person to its team.

The program is designed to intervene with families that have or are at risk of having abused or neglected children.

Pat Dougan, who has been with the program for eight years, is part of an interagency committee which meets bi-monthly to discuss issues, resource allocation and other matters related to child sexual abuse. The committee is chaired by Dave Wellings of Alberta Social Services.

Pat also worked with the University of Calgary Continuing Education Faculty on the development of a course designed to assist teachers to respond appropriately when children reveal that they are victims of sexual abuse.

Northwest

Grande Prairie, the only community in the Region that has an emergency shelter for abused women and their children, now has a treatment program for abusers. The program is sponsored by the John Howard Society and funded by Alberta Social Services. Local therapists Jennifer Penton and Felix Gardenas, with assistance from Michael Crawford from Alberta Hospital Edmonton, Forensic Assessment and Community Services began the first series of group therapy sessions early in 1986.

Also available in Grande Prairie is a play therapy program for children displaying behavior problems as a result of being neglected or physically or sexually abused. The program is operated by Gerry Zuidwyk.

Northeast

Board members and staff of Unity House, the women's emergency shelter in Fort McMurray, are planning a conference on family violence for October (see Conferences section for dates).

Barbara Pressman, therapist and writer from Guelph, Ontario, will give an overview of family violence, talk about programs for victims and programs for batterers and discuss a community approach to the issue. Dr. Jennifer Rice, a former Alberta coroner now practicing in B.C., will discuss medical protocols. Trish Stenson, Anderson and Mayes Counselling Association, Calgary, will make presentations on the effects of family violence on children. Susan Bottun, Lac La Biche, will talk about Legal Issues in family violence. Conference Planner, Lois Jack, is hoping the conference will stimulate interested persons in the community to join together in a consortium to better address the family violence issues.

Edmonton

Thousands participated in the St. Albert R.C.M.P./Kinsmen celebrity weekend on June 28 and 29 to raise funds to prevent child abuse.

The weekend, which raised \$75,000, included a celebrity brunch and auction as well as a champagne brunch and golf tournament at the Sturgeon Golf and Country Club. Twenty Hollywood stars, as well as local celebrity Oiler Kevin Lowe, participated.

During the golf tournament, St. Albert District Office staffed a Department display which included information on family violence.

Money raised will be used to establish a child abuse crime prevention bureau and to fund Catalyst Theatre's production of *Feeling Yes, Feeling No*.

Central

Diana Almberg, Director of Wainwright Family and Community Services, sparked some action in her community on behalf of abused women when she wrote an article for the local paper in March, challenging people to do something about the problem. Since that time a support group for abused women has been established. Members of the group have written articles about family violence for the local newspaper, organized a telephone support system for women unable to attend the group and a transportation network of volunteers to transport women to emergency shelters in Lloydminster or Camrose. In June the FCSS Board approved the establishment of a crisis line for one year as a pilot project. FCSS staff take calls during the day and the installation of a diverter enables the women's emergency shelter staff in Lloydminster to take after-hour calls.

South

Lethbridge has two community agencies that offer a variety of programs and services related to family violence issues.

The Society for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect has been operating since 1982. Their resource centre is open to the public and coordinator Pat Pharo is available to assist in both developing and presenting workshops. Volunteer training and parent support groups are also offered.

Lethbridge Family Services offer group programs for women involved in violent relationships, adult, children and adolescent survivors of incest, mothers of incest victims, men who have problems controlling anger, and parents needing support in child rearing. Agency people are available to give presentations in the community.

Film Review

The Next Step

The Next Step is a recently released series of three films that examine what happens to battered women once they decide to leave their violent relationships. The films explore the various services women need as they attempt to rebuild their lives.

Sylvie's Story depicts the services available to Sylvie who seeks refuge in a transition house in Montreal. She comes to realize that the most important aspect of her stay at the transition house is that it has enabled her to start the long process of regaining her sense of self worth after years of being physically and emotionally assaulted.

A Safe Distance looks at the various services and programs designed to meet the special needs of women in rural, northern and native communities. The film examines approaches taken by women in Portage La Prairie, Manitoba and West Bay Reserve, Ontario, as well as other innovative approaches providing much needed services to battered women in isolated areas.

Moving On describes the many initiatives taken by the community of London, Ontario in its efforts to assist battered women. Their coordinated approach presents a model from which other communities can learn.

Films were funded by the National Film Board of Canada and the Federal Women's Film Program and are available from National Film Board outlets.

Book Review

A Program to Train Lay Counsellors to Counsel and Support Battered Women is a manual which has been developed by Education Wife Assault, a Toronto based organization. The manual provides core resource material for interested groups to use in creating training programs in their own communities.

The approach the material takes and the philosophy on which the program is built is based on the beliefs that "the goal in working with battered women is to ensure their safety and provide them with an opportunity to take control of their own lives" (page 6) and "counselling and support of battered women has to take account of the realities of their daily lives; the role of women in society and the implications of that role in individual lives; the fact that women do not enjoy equal rights, economic and social opportunity, and mobility; and the role that institutions play in maintaining the status quo and therefore inequality in relationships" (page 9).

The training program is extensive, requiring from 25 to 40 hours per week for 10 months with an additional 160 hours for a community development component. Suggestions for setting up a training program are included along with some advice about selecting trainees. Course materials include papers on many aspects of the social setting of the problem and specific discussions and exercises to help develop counselling skills. The manual is available from Education Wife Assault, 427 Bloor Street West, Toronto, M5S 1X7. Cost: \$7.95.

Available soon from the Office for the Prevention of Family Violence: *Directory of Initiatives*: A compendium of services and other initiatives operating in Alberta that directly address the issue of violence in families.

Calendar of Events

October 15 - 17 Fort McMurray
Coming Together: A Community Approach to Family Violence

Contact: Glenys Melsom
Unity House
P.O. Box 6165
Fort McMurray T9H 4W1
Phone: 743-1190

October 18 Toronto
Addiction and Family Violence

Contact: Donwood Institute
175 Brentcliffe Road
Toronto M4G 3Z1
Phone: (416) 425-3930

November 19 Lethbridge
Prosecuting Child Sexual Abuse Cases
Contact: Society for the Prevention of Child Abuse

216 Professional Building
740 - 4th Avenue South
Lethbridge T1J 0N8
Phone: 320-9040

"FOCUS: FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION" is a quarterly publication of the Office for the Prevention of Family Violence. Submissions for future issues, especially news about community activities, are welcome. To put your name on the mailing list, contact the Office. Address all correspondence to:
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